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Doctors in Alabama decreasing the number of opioid prescriptions they write

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By Samantha Day [CONNECT](#)

MONTGOMERY, AL (WSFA) - Physicians across the United States are helping battle the opioid crisis by lowering the number of opioid prescriptions they write.

"Prescriptions are decreasing, people are paying attention," Dr. David Herrick, a physician at Baptist South, said.

Dr. Herrick is one of the doctors decreasing the number of opioid prescriptions he hands out.

"Across the board all of us have reduced the amount of opioids that we use," Dr. Herrick said.

He said it's all a matter of finding the right alternative.

"Finding the right medicine at the right dose and the lowest dose that you can use and have an effect," Dr. Herrick said.

In some cases, physical therapy can be used in place of a pill.

"There are lots of medicine that can be used. Physical therapy is a big part of this. Psychological treatment is also a big part of this," Dr. Herrick said.

And knowing your patient.

"You have to make sure they have something that can potentially be helped or needs to be helped with something like an opioid. they're very dangerous when they're not used appropriately," Dr. Herrick said.

It's so dangerous that more than 115 people in the U.S. die from an opioid overdose every day.

"Since 2013, prescriptions for opioids in Alabama have decreased," Dr. Herrick said.

According to the American Medical Association, Alabama beat the national average of 22.2 percent by decreasing opioid prescriptions by 23.3 percent. It's something Dr. Herrick is proud of.

"That's a big change and it has come because physicians have cared, they have educated themselves and they are aware now that there has to be great concern when these medicines are used," Dr. Herrick said.

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